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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Discussion: Heritage in Times of War - part 2

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With the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine, along with the preservation of the integrity of the state and the preservation of people's lives, the issues of preserving cultural heritage and national identification became acute. No matter how strange and difficult it is, the museums and nature reserves that did not fall under the occupation did not stop working. And this year, archaeological research, conferences, and thematic excursions were held. In part, the reenactment community was active. All this was combined with volunteering for the front and helping the victims, in particular colleagues, because a large part of cultural and scientific workers went to the front зdefend Ukraine with volunteers. Some of them, being in the Armed Forces, continue to contribute to the development of the industry in a new format. Those who remained in their places faced new realities, daily challenges (shelling, lack of electricity, water, reduction of personnel) but with a new powerful motivation that moves our people to victory. Museum workers and reenactors decided to share their thoughts.

1. What do you think about the importance of your work and do you continue it during the war ?
2. What difficulties did you face in this situation and how do you overcome them?
3. How do you think the war will affect the activities after the victory, what is the first do you plan to implement for the development of the industry?

"We became part of the cultural front. After all, culture is the best way to convey why and for what
we are fighting, our values and freedoms."

Oleksandr Didyk

Researcher, archaeologist of Historical and cultural reserve “Ancient Plisnesk”
Main work: archaeological research, development/promotion of the open-air museum as an institution.
Interests: experimental archaeology, creation of quality media content, related to archaeology.

The first question should be answered from three perspectives – personal, institutional, and social. Activity, work is always a choice. It can be for different reasons and circumstances. On the personal side – I have certain obligations. On the institutional side, it is important to have our own institutions that are developing on national basis, which have formed continuity and tradition.

The social part is an extremely necessary area of work. After all, any scientific, popularization, educational component should always be addressed to people. Considering the above, the

main task of my work is to lay the foundations for stable and consistent activities of successors, or those who will come after me. There is nothing worse than a constant change of random people, who change everything for themselves. There are many difficulties, the main problems are: Soviet thinking and
stereotypes, lack of planning and organization of work, inconsistent activity. Lack of funding, bureaucracy, over-centralization, inappropriate or no state policy – these are, in fact, issues of management or control as such. How can we overcome the existing problems ? – Directly, in no way. Only consistent long-term work. In my case, the solving of problems has a scheme: analysis, structuring, search for solutions, search for resources, realization of the plan. Of course, we need to be frank – not everything works out as we wanted or in a clear time frame. However, it is better than nothing.

The war is unlikely to radically change the existing order of things. Most probably, all of us are already seeing the cognitive collapse of many state institutions, with the formal preservation of the “facade” and work. It is necessary to fully recognize obvious mathematical things – funding will be less, the number of specialists in this area will decrease, professional competences at the appropriate/pre-war level would be extremely difficult to keep. Even a significant infusion of money after victory will not correct the situation – the gap and losses are too large. Under perfect conditions the first modest results are possible no sooner than in 5-7 years. What will I do first? – I'm doing a little bit now, I have my own small plan of action. The first steps are the implementation of stable research, the development of experimental archaeology – as a way of presenting the past and communication. The next steps are the foundation of a strong research center or space. At the same time – work on practical components management and promotion. Then, we need to look at the situation. However, there are no special alternatives.

PhD Iryna Stasiuk

Researcher of the National Reserve "Davnii Halych", projekt manager

Work is always important, regardless of war or peace. Work is an indicator of human essence, competence, professionalism. Work in the field of culture during the war is as a need and a must for everyone involved. I believe that culture is national identification and is what makes Ukrainians fundamentally Ukrainian. Our identity is our strength now, it shows that we are free, independent and completely different from that black force that affects us, which for centuries unified people into something amorphous, into something "Soviet", into something the same.
Why don't I stop my work during the war? It's probably the only thing that keeps me going in a healthy state of mind and in good health. My husband, Stasiuk Andriy, is a scientist, PhD, manager of the scientific and educational department of the "Davnii Halych" Scientific and Technological Research Center. He is also, part-time, a volunteer junior sergeant of the Armed

Forces of Ukraine. To somehow quell my fear and anger I work, I write projects for international and Ukrainian grants to meet needs. Since the needs, as always, are many, and the funds are few, it's not an easy way out of the situation, but I consider it a kind of cultural diplomacy. After all, in the course of writing an application I introduce partners to our culture, its needs, its cultural institutions, its national importance and its potential.

Difficulties, such as these, are always a challenge. But for me, every challenge is an opportunity for development. This is when you overcome obstacles and grow professionally. The challenge for the team and the entire reserve was and is the bureaucratic red tape in all our public services, which has not gone anywhere either at the beginning of the war or now, when the war has been going on for a year. This is a situation in which the Ministry of Culture simply emphasises participation in grant programs, but there is no simplification in the circulation and processing of documents or in relations with the treasury. This creates big obstacles not only for us, but also for our foreign partners. I would like more understanding and cooperation in this direction.

I don't dream and I don't plan more than one week ahead. I live each day - and for that day I say thanks. I believe that there will definitely be no turning back either politically or in the field of culture, which is beginning to develop at the speed of light. It is interesting, intense and very "open". The world offers its help; grant programs are opened every week, which is very gratifying, because it allows you to implement interesting ideas. The main thing is the desire to work.

PhD Evgeny Sinytsia

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My main job is teaching. The educational process at the two universities where I have the honor to give lectures (Taras Shevchenko Kyiv National University and National University Kyiv-Mohyla Academy) was interrupted only during the siege of Kyiv (last days of February - first days of April 2022). It felt very good that for the students the classes turned into a kind of therapy, a way to distract from the current, without any exaggeration, terrible reality. In my opinion, the continuation of the educational process, even if not in a very complete form, is one of the elements of maintaining control, which is absolutely necessary for victory in the war. Institutions, in particular educational institutions, should continue to work and perform their functions even with the most limited resources.

As for public activities, the large-scale hostilities have severely exacerbated the issue of damage to the cultural heritage of Ukraine, in particular, to the archaeological heritage. Therefore, voicing this issue in the public sphere, in Ukraine and abroad, is clearly a task that cannot be postponed until after victory.

After all, public lectures, excursions and similar cultural activities, are currently one of the tools for accumulating funds that go to help the army, refugees and people who are in trouble in the de-occupied territories. Therefore, the continuation of this activity has now acquired not only an educational character, but also has a completely understandable utilitarian component.

The difficulties I face in my work are the same that all people in Ukraine live with: interruptions to the supply of electricity and communications and complicated logistics. This affects both education and causes difficulties in planning and holding public events. The biggest problem in terms of professional activity at the moment is the impossibility of carrying out archaeological fieldwork. Without mentioning the security aspects, there are simply no resources for it. There are no universal solutions for overcoming these difficulties, we are more likely to rely on improvisation and short-term planning, thinking through several scenarios for different circumstances.

Moving on to training, there should not be any special changes after the victory, compared to the current time unless students and teachers can finally return to classrooms, and the amount of distance learning is at least minimised, if not disappearing altogether. The most obvious task for archaeologists will be to record the damage caused by the war to monuments and museum collections (this work is already underway, at least to the extent possible during active hostilities), but after the victory, much more effort will have to be made here.

Maryan Ivanochko

Re-enactor of the late Middle Ages, graduate student
https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100017144832570

First of all, a re-enactor should acknowledge himself as an active participant at an event. He should not be simply an empty-minded mannequin, because such limited action at an event only fulfils the goals of rest and entertainment, but not of a hobby and lifestyle. A re-enactor is a person who conducts analysis of historical resources, comes to a conclusion and develops an element of clothing or even a whole costume, based on the 14th century environment in Galicia for example. Our peasant or worker could be dressed in clothing made of cloth obtained from a workshop in Galicia or brought from Silesia, with a corresponding cut, this person could show their status with a brass belt buckle; the infantryman could have plate armor and a spear based on the archeological finds in the region, he could serve as a knight

or be a mercenary; the knight could be armed with a sword found on the banks of the Dnister, characterised by the corresponding coat of arms and so on. This shows the value of re-enactment – it is practical reproduction, application and explanation, while the historian simply reflects on the description, artistic or digital visualisation of the acquired data.

Nowadays, my only activity involves researching sources and planning. The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia forces a conscious citizen to focus on the efficiency and safety of the Ukrainian military and not to meet their own facultative aesthetic or practical needs. Therefore, from a knight-fighter, I turned into a knight-donator (this term had a slightly different meaning in the Middle Ages and was awarded to those who sponsored churches and temples). The findings of historians or archaeologists and the identification of artefacts can cause controversy and there can be incorrect interpretation of the data obtained. A re-enactor who is a producer and user of medieval daily routine or martial items can enter the game to solve these issues. He can become an experimenter and through these means can consider the data and put ideas into practice even more successfully. I have plans to create a YouTube channel, which will contain content showing crash-tests and efficiency tests of recreated weapons and equipment, as well as review weapons and equipment from computer games and cinema in terms of their realism and use in real history.

Martial arts are perhaps the most popular aspect of re-enactment for a wide range of viewers. The knight in authentic armour or a fighter in a stylized and safe set is also a type of experimenter. While pursuing a different purpose a fighter tests armor for convenience, lightness, safety and endurance. Despite the absence of tournaments and festivals, the impossibility of travelling abroad, regular black-outs and the danger of missiles, people who have not yet swapped swords for rifles continue to train young blood in fencing and medieval battle. A tailor, blacksmith or knifemaker with desire and talent can develop their work to earn good money. For about 4 years I have made medieval brigantine armor for re-enactment and sport commercially. Nowadays this activity allows me to get a customer base from abroad. This providesadditional finances for the Armed Forces of Ukraine to accelerate our victory over the invaders.

My knight's armor and weapons layouts are not going to gather dust as home decorations or go rusty unused in a bag. I prefer to occupy my free time with activity over winter, the period between the festival seasons. Even before the full-scale invasion, my main areas of employment were festivals, sports tournaments, promotion through public events and charity. Since mass performances are limited to maintain safety and order under the conditions of martial law, lessons for educational and cultural institutions, involvement in charitable activities and manufacturing armor with the aim of transfering of funds received to the Armed Forces of Ukraine have become relevant. Beside these activities I still long for the past years of active weekends, adventures and journeys. But all of these will return after we defeat our aggressors.

Now most of our re-enactors are working towards victory, once this has been achieved we will again gather for the realization of our dreams and ambitions. We have a great historical heritage, which must be defended and developed in research and scientific circles, striving for innovations of the Western world and rejecting beliefs that are remnants of the influence of Russia. My future plans are now mostly related to the local National Reserve “Ancient Halych” and the creation of a garrison of the castle of the Galicia-Volyn Principality and the Grunwald Battle on the grounds of their institution.

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